

"Church History in The Fullness of Times"

THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD

United States. He served only six months and then convinced the Saints in New York that he was needed in Salt Lake City immediately. They responded generously to his request for funds to make the return trip.

In November 1860 he was called by President Brigham Young to do missionary work in the Pacific. President Young told Gibson that he would do more good than he ever anticipated if he would magnify his calling.

Arriving in Hawaii in the summer of 1861, Gibson exceeded the bounds of his authority, mixed native traditions with gospel teachings, and won support of the Hawaiian Saints. Because the missionaries had been called home during the Utah War, Gibson was able to take over the leadership of the Saints. He proclaimed himself "Chief President of the Islands of the Sea, and of the Hawaiian Islands, for the Church of Latter-day Saints." Gibson persuaded the Hawaiian members to turn over to him all of their property. He ordained twelve apostles, charging them \$150 each for that office. For other offices, such as high priest, seventy, and elder, he charged proportionate fees. He also installed archbishops and minor bishops.⁸ He conducted church services with extraordinary pomp and ceremony and even wore robes and required members to bow and crawl in his presence. Gibson's design was to build an army, unite all the Hawaiian Islands into one empire, and proclaim himself king.

Finally in ^{March} 1864, concerned native Saints wrote to Salt Lake City about the situation. President Young sent Ezra T. Benson and Lorenzo Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve and Joseph F. Smith, Alma Smith, and William Cluff, who all had labored in Hawaii as missionaries, to take care of the problems.

Wm
Wallace
Cluff

Arriving at the island of Lanai, where Gibson had his headquarters, the Brethren encountered stiff winds and turbulent seas in the harbor. While going ashore in a smaller craft, they were capsized. Except for Lorenzo Snow, everyone was safely rescued by natives who witnessed the accident from the shore. Lorenzo's lifeless body was finally found under the capsized boat. There was little doubt in the minds of any of those present that he was dead. His devoted brethren laid his body across their knees and with faith prayed over him and administered to him, although the natives declared there was no use. The Brethren endeavored to stimulate breathing by rolling him over a barrel and then by compressing his chest and breathing into his mouth and drawing the air out again. It was one hour or more after the accident before the first signs of life returned.⁹

After locating Gibson, the elders found that conditions were even worse than they had been told. They confronted Gibson and ordered him to turn over to them all the property and money he had acquired in the name of the Church. He refused. The Brethren then excommunicated him. After a few weeks, most of the Hawaiian Saints were reconciled to the leaders of the Church who had been sent to them. One incident that helped the brethren regain the confidence of the Hawaiian Saints occurred when two of them



William Wallace Cluff (1832–1915) was called to serve as Presiding Bishop over Morgan, Summit, and Wasatch counties. He was released in 1877 when President Brigham Young, as part of the priesthood reorganization of the Church, announced that there would only be one Presiding Bishop of the Church—Edward Hunter. William was called to preside over the Scandinavia mission and also served as president of the Summit Stake.

DIFFICULTIES IN HAWAII

Another person to concern Church officials during this period was a soldier of fortune Walter Murray Gibson. Gibson had advocated Church's cause in Washington, D.C., during the Utah War and came to Lake City to learn more about the Saints. He became acquainted with numerous Church leaders, spoke to large crowds in the Old Tabernacle about his travels, and was baptized by Heber C. Kimball on 15 January 1858 along with his daughter Talula. He was confirmed by Brigham Young. President Young rejected Gibson's proposal that the Saints move to the islands of the East Indies, but called Gibson on a mission to the east.